

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated December 13, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on March 13, 2007. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1, 4-12, and 14-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 4-12, and 14-20 remain pending following entry of this response. Claims 1, 7, 15, and 18 have been amended. New claims 22-24 have been added to recite aspects of the invention. New claims 22-24 correspond to the previously cancelled claims 3, 13, and 21. Applicant submits that the amendments and new claims do not introduce new matter.

Interview Summary

On Thursday, March 8, 2007, a telephonic interview was held between Gero G. McClellan, attorney of record and the Examiner. The parties discussed proposed amendments to Claims 1, 7, 15, and 18. The proposed amendments are reflected in this response. The parties reached an agreement that the cited references do not teach the subject matter of the amended claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 4-5, 7-10, & 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Namekawa* (US Pat. No. 6,115,301 A) and further in view of *Arase* (U.S. Pat. No. 5,808,945 A).

Claims 6, 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Namekawa* in view of *Arase*, and further in view of *Bemis* (U.S. Pat. no. 4,692,894 A).

Claims 14, 16, & 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Namekawa* in view of *Arase* and further in view of *Sakata* (U.S. PG-Pub No. 20010045581 A1). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

For each of the present rejections, Applicant submits that the cited prior art does not teach or suggest all the claim limitations. For example, Applicant submits that the prior art does not teach that "one or more replacement redundant groups are selected from a redundant word line group if the defective memory areas that are addressable by

a common word line group exceeds a first maximum number of defective memory areas and from a redundant bit line group if the defective memory areas that are addressable by a common bit line group exceeds a second maximum number of defective memory areas”.

Arase teaches that a defective word line or the defective bit line is replaced when there is a match in the address. Thus, in *Arase*, addresses are represented numerically and can be classified as numbers, and the word line address can be interpreted as the first number which is maximum to a smaller address. The same can be interpreted for the address representation of the bit line.

Applicant agrees with the Examiner’s assertions that *Arase* teaches that defective areas are “replaced when there is a match in the address”, that addresses can be “represented numerically”, and that “the word line address can be interpreted as the first number which is maximum to a smaller address”. However, in the recited element of selecting a replacement redundant group “if the defective memory areas that are addressable by a common word line group exceeds a first maximum number”, the word “exceeds” refers to a number of “defective memory areas”, not to an address. This distinction is reflected in the amended claims.

Thus, the pending claims disclose a condition that is met when the number of defective memory areas exceeds a maximum number of defective memory areas. The art of records does not teach such a condition. As stated by the Examiner in the *Response to Office Action dated December 13, 2006* at Page 2, the Examiner accepts Applicant’s argument in this regard. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that *Arase* does not teach or suggest all the limitations of the present Claims 1, 7, 15, 18, and the claims that depend therefrom. Accordingly, Applicant submits these claims, as well as their dependents, are allowable, and respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted, and
S-signed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.4,

/Gero G. McClellan, Reg. No. 44,227/

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